

position in which he served for 8 terms. In the Texas Legislature, Ed was a leader on issues of law enforcement, education, environmental protection, and creating economic opportunity, and he served several terms as Chairman of the Harris County Delegation. Currently he is a Community Liaison on my congressional staff in Pasadena and Deer Park, Texas.

Ed is a charter member of the Deer Park Chamber of Commerce and a charter member of the Lions Club. He served fourteen years as a volunteer fireman and is now one of six honorary members. He has been actively involved in the Wheel House, a 30-day alcohol rehabilitation facility, since 1954 and serves on their board of directors. Ed visits daily, reaching out to the residents, solving problems when they arise, and fundraising.

Ed also serves on the board of directors of the Interfaith Helping Hands Ministry. He also volunteers his time at First Baptist Church, serving on the Benevolence Committee and reaching out to people not only in the church, but in the community as well. Because of his caring ways, Ed was named Dear Park Citizen of the Year in 1987. With Jerry, Ed also works with the Interfaith Helping Hands Ministry and she has served on the Bereavement Committee at First Baptist Church many times.

In all that he has done, Ed Watson has been a leader, organizer, and innovator. Known for his activism and leadership in both politics and public service, his legacy will be remembered by the community and to the many who have benefited from his good deeds.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Ed Watson on the occasion of his 80th birthday and to commend him on a lifetime of achievement. I join Ed's family and friends and all those he has inspired in honoring him on this occasion. May the coming years bring good health, happiness, and time to enjoy his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION RULEMAKING PROCESS NEEDS A JUMP START

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2000

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Transportation's Office of the Inspector General today released the results of a study, done at my request, of the Department's rulemaking process. The IG's report conforms what many of us involved in transportation policy have suspected, that the DOT is doing a poor job meeting rulemaking deadlines.

According to the report, DOT is taking, on average, twice as long to issue rules as it did just six years ago. The report compares the number of significant rules completed in 1999, and the average time it complete each process, with corresponding figures from 1993. The results are not encouraging. In 1993, the department issued 45 rules and took an average of 1.8 years to complete work on each; in 1999, the department issued 20 new rules

after working an average of 3.8 years on each. In other words, DOT is taking twice as long to do half as much.

The study further shows that the Office of the Secretary is the slowest among the operating administrations in the department, taking an average of 6.6 years in 1999 to complete action on proposed rules. In 1993 the Secretary's office took an average of 4.4 years. The office issued the same number of rules—three—in 1993 and 1999.

The Federal Aviation Administration showed the most significant drop in rulemaking productivity in the study. In 1993, the FAA issued 17 significant rules and took an average of eight to nine months (0.7 years) to complete the process. In 1999, the FAA issued only three rules, and took an average of three years to finish work on each, four times as long to complete less than one-sixth the workload.

Only the Federal Railroad Administration and the Federal Transit Administration showed improvement in the average time to complete rulemaking between 1993 and 1999. However, the FRA issued only two rules in each of the two years studied, and FTA issued two rules in 1993 and one rule in 1999.

The report goes on to say that the department routinely misses statutory deadlines for issuing rules. The report shows that the DOT's record was poor in 1993 and has improved only marginally since then. In 1993, the department completed only 12 of 29 rules mandated by Congress (41.4 percent) and completed only four of the 29 by the mandated deadline (13.8 percent). In 1999, the department completed 21 of 43 such rules (48.8 percent) and met the deadline on 10 of them (23.2 percent). This is a dismal record.

The IG's report cites several reasons for these delays. In the case of Congressionally mandated rules, work is often delayed by a disagreement between Congress and the department over the content of the rule. The complexity of the rulemaking process also contributes to the problem. However, the report cites poor management by the modal administrators as a significant contributor to the lack of progress on new rules.

In its analysis of 54 completed rulemakings, the study that found rules languished an average of two years on the modal administrator's desk with no action taken. The report said in many cases the rulemaking process stalled because the administrator would not make a decision on whether a rule should advance or be terminated, did not consider the rule a priority, or waited for future events, such as the development of new technology, that would affect the rule.

When the modal administrator considers a rulemaking to be a priority, the process can move quickly. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration took less than one year to produce a rule providing grants to states with a legal blood alcohol limit of 0.08. Yet, NHTSA still has not completed action on a rule on the flammability of materials on school buses after working on it for 11 years. The report states that NHTSA has wanted to terminate the rule, but the Federal Transit Administration and the Deputy Secretary opposed terminating it. Even though the Deputy Secretary charged NHTSA to work with FTA to work out

their differences, NHTSA has not worked on the rule for the past three years.

These rules affect public safety—children on school buses, passengers in airplanes, ships at sea, motorists at rail crossings, neighborhoods near gas pipelines. We cannot allow bureaucratic gridlock to put people's lives at risk.

To its credit, the DOT, according to this report, has accepted the IG's findings and is taking steps to improve its management of the rulemaking process.

I have discussed this matter with Sec. Rodney Slater and urged him to use these remaining months to take significant action to reduce or eliminate this backlog of pending rules and provide a clean slate for the next administration.

I am very pleased with Sec. Slater's firm commitment to follow through and press the modal administrators to put the rule making process into high gear.

In doing so, the Secretary can show the American people that government can work efficiently, can be responsive to their concerns, and can adopt the same attitude of compliance that it demands of the private sector it regulates.

TRIBUTE TO DAUNE WEISS,
BUERGERMEISTER FOR THE
GAYLORD, MICHIGAN, ALPEN-
FEST 2000

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2000

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call your attention to a unique celebration in Gaylord, a small city in my northern Michigan district. The event is called Alpenfest, and over its 35 year history it has come to serve many purposes in Gaylord. Alpenfest is the community's major celebration, providing a broad range of family entertainment. Alpenfest spotlights the unique architectural heritage of Gaylord, where strict zoning codes require downtown businesses to conform to an Alpine motif. Perhaps most important for my remarks today, Mr. Speaker, Alpenfest provides a annual setting to name a community Burgermeister, an honorary mayor.

Daune Weiss, a Gaylord businesswoman and a close, personal friend, has received this honor for the year 2000. The local paper, the Gaylord Herald Times, describes this honor as the equivalent of being named the Citizen of the Year for Gaylord and Otsego County, and I can think of no person in the community more worthy of this special recognition to begin the new millennium.

Daune, a native of Upper Michigan, left the area but later returned. It's perhaps typical of Daune's view of her own contributions that she feels her 14 years of commitment to the local community don't measure up against those who have spent their lives here. A brief review of her accomplishments, a detailed in the Gaylord Herald Times, makes clear, however, that Gaylord has found one of its greatest friends.

The owner of the local Holiday Inn, Daune established a Wish Tree, helping to fulfill

about 300 wishes each year for local children. She created the Gaylord Wish Tree Foundation in 1987 and serves as its president.

She has served on the Board of Directors of the Otesgo County United Way since 1993 and has served on the Alpenfest Honors Luncheon Committee—the panel that honors local industry each year—since 1991.

With interests in several other hotels, Daune is active in local business and community promotion organizations, serving on the Gaylord Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors and the Gaylord Area Convention and Tourism Bureau. The dedicated community activist also serves or has served on the boards of directors of Northern Michigan University, the West Michigan Tourist Association, and the North County Bank and Trust.

When an opportunity arose this spring to bring business representatives from our district to take part in a workshop with Cabinet officers and other federal representatives, Daune Weiss was the first name that came to mind. I know she would be personally interested in the meetings, would offer excellent input on the interface of government and business, and would bring valuable information and insights back to her community.

Daune has received numerous other honors, Mr. Speaker, but I wanted to call attention to her being named as the 21st Buergermeister chosen by the Gaylord Herald Times, because the honor and the Alpenfest event so perfectly represent the enterprising spirit of the community. I hope my House colleagues will have an opportunity in the future to attend this colorful, unique family celebration. For today, however, I invite House members to join me in offering our congratulations to the paper for its excellent choice of Daune Weiss as Buergermeister for Alpenfest 2000.

SUPPORT OF THE AMERICAN DREAM OF HOMEOWNERSHIP

HON. HENRY BONILLA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2000

Mr. BONILLA. Mr. Speaker, America is the land of opportunity. More Americans have owned homes than any people in the history of man. However, the American dream is not a reality for far too many of our countrymen. For all too many Americans the dream of homeownership is just that, a dream, not a reality. Federal government actions have raised the cost of building materials leaving homes beyond the financial reach of many of our countrymen.

The Softwood Lumber Agreement (SLA) between our nation and Canada continues to deny Americans the benefits of homeownership. It violates the spirit of NAFTA by creating barriers to commerce instead of ripping them down. It denies American consumers the competition that leads to increased choice and lower prices. The American people have waited far too long for a free trade agreement in softwood lumber. An IMF economist has estimated that the SLA increases new home costs as much as \$1300 per home, denying over 300,000 Americans the ability to purchase a

home according to Census Bureau projections.

However, there is hope. We can have free trade in softwood lumber soon. The SLA is scheduled to expire on April 1, 2001 and we have the opportunity to share the benefits of free trade with home buyers. 113 Members of Congress have joined me as cosponsors of H. Con. Res. 252, calling for free softwood lumber trade between the U.S. and Canada.

The support for free trade is evident, but in order to make it a reality we need to negotiate a long term free trade agreement with Canada. Let's begin negotiations now to replace the SLA with a free trade agreement in softwood lumber and make housing affordable for more Americans. The American Dream should be a reality for all Americans.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO EXPRESS THE POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES REGARDING THE UNITED STATES RELATIONSHIP WITH NATIVE HAWAIIANS

HON. NEIL ABERCROMBIE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2000

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a bill to clarify the political relationship between Native Hawaiians and the United States. For years, Congress has legislated on behalf of Native Hawaiians as the aboriginal, indigenous, native peoples of Hawaii. This measure clarifies that political relationship and provides a process for Native Hawaiians to form a Native Hawaiian governing body to engage in a government-to-government relationship with the United States.

The United States has declared a special responsibility for the welfare of the Native peoples of the United States, including Native Hawaiians. This relationship has been acknowledged by the United States since the inception of Hawaii's status as a territory. This relationship was most explicitly affirmed by the enactment of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1920, which set aside 200,000 acres of land in Hawaii for homesteading by Native Hawaiians. Legislative history clearly shows that in addressing this situation, Congress based this action and subsequent legislation on the constitutional precedent in programs enacted for the benefit of American Indians.

Since Hawaii's admission into the Union, Congress has continued to legislate on behalf of Native Hawaiians as indigenous peoples. Native Hawaiians have been included as Native Americans in a number of federal statutes which have addressed the conditions of Native Hawaiians. P.L. 103–150, the Apology Resolution, extended an apology on behalf of the United States to the Native people of Hawaii for the United States' role in the overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii. The Apology Resolution also expressed the commitment of Congress and the President to acknowledge the ramifications of the overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii and to support reconciliation efforts between the United States and Native Hawaiians.

The legislation I am introducing today is important not only to Native Hawaiians, but to all people in Hawaii. This measure provides the process to begin resolving many longstanding issues facing Hawaii's indigenous peoples and the State of Hawaii. In addressing these issues, we have begun a process of healing, a process of reconciliation not only with the United States but within the State of Hawaii. The essence of Hawaii is characterized not by the beauty of its islands, but by the beauty of its people. The State of Hawaii has recognized, acknowledged and acted upon the need to preserve the culture, tradition, language and heritage of Hawaii's indigenous peoples. This measure furthers these actions.

The clarification of the political relationship between Native Hawaiians and the United States is one that has been long in coming and is well-deserved. Unfortunately, the history and the timing of Hawaii's relationship to the United States has not provided the appropriate structure for a government-to-government relationship between Hawaii's indigenous native peoples and the United States. The time has come to correct this injustice.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROBERT A. WEYGAND

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2000

Mr. WEYGAND. Mr. Speaker, during House consideration of H.R. 1102, the Comprehensive Retirement Security and Pension Reform Act, I regret that I missed rollcall votes 410 and 411. I was unavoidably detained returning from the funeral of Senator John O. Pastore in Rhode Island.

Had I been here I would have voted "yea" on both votes. Rollcall vote No. 410, the Democratic substitute, offered by Representative NEAL, would have added provisions to H.R. 1102 that would have offered tax credits to small businesses to set up pension plans for their employees. The substitute would also have provided refundable tax credits for low and middle income workers to encourage them to save for their retirement. As a former small business owner, I understand both the importance of providing pensions to the employees of small businesses and the difficulties small businesses often face as they attempt to establish these plans. I believe that the provisions of the substitute would have made a good bill even better and I regret that the substitute was not agreed to.

I would also have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 411. This motion to recommit H.R. 1102 would have sent the bill back to Committee with instructions to include additional language requiring that there must be an on-budget surplus and prescription drug coverage for Medicare beneficiaries through the Medicare program before the tax and pension relief provisions of the bill could be enacted. Maintaining our hard-won surplus and providing prescription drug coverage to our senior citizens are critically important and must be given the highest of priorities. I regret that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle do not share our belief in keeping the federal budget in surplus